



December 3, 2008

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Peter Conrad, Director
Local Government Assistance
Maryland Department of Planning
301 W. Preston Street, Suite 1101
Baltimore MD 21201-2305

Dear Mr. Conrad:

Re: Review of the City of Rockville Comprehensive Master Plan

This letter is to inform you that the State-required 6-year review of the City of Rockville's Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP) is underway. Rockville's current CMP was adopted in November 2002, so we are on schedule.

We began our review process with a Staff Technical Audit that was launched with a presentation to Rockville's Senior Staff in July 2008. Staff across City Departments were asked to review sections of the Plan relevant to their work and submit responses to the Long Range Planning Division of the Department of Community Planning and Development Services (CPDS), which I direct. In addition, the Planning staff conducted reviews of each of our eighteen Planning Areas and the land-use related chapters. Two staff workshops were conducted: the first of which shared information on each of the Planning Areas; and the second identified critical sites, critical areas and critical issues.

Senior Staff reviewed the outcome of the Staff Technical Audit at a staff Round Table Presentation and Discussion on October 7, 2008. Staff members shared their "top ten" items, and a series of other topics. It was a good discussion and offered the senior staff an opportunity to think strategically and across departmental lines.

Staff has organized the staff comments into tables for ease of reference, and these tables will form the basis for upcoming Rockville Planning Commission discussions on the approach to take towards deciding whether or not to revise the 2002 Comprehensive Master Plan, and if so, by how much. In addition, we are proposing a discussion on the common themes that are emerging: urbanization, density, the increasingly multi-cultural population, the links between land use and the fiscal impact it has upon the City. Staff is seeking direction from the Planning Commission on the approach they would like to take towards the Review and has recommended working through the document chapter by chapter and also expanding the discussion to include the State-required planning elements.

MAYOR
Susan R. Hoffmann

COUNCIL
John B. Britton
Piotr Gajewski
Phyllis Marcuccio
Anne M. Robbins

CITY MANAGER
Scott Ullery

CITY CLERK
Claire F. Funkhouser

CITY ATTORNEY
Paul T. Glasgow

The next steps in the review process will include:

- Identify policies/goals/recommendations that should be revised.
- Continue work to update supporting text and quantify existing conditions.
- Continue staff work on the three new elements required by the State: Residential Capacity Analysis, Municipal Growth and Water Resources.
- Continue work on the on-going planning initiatives.
- Identify topic areas that may need additional staff or other resources to pursue, such as updating the City's *Housing Goals and Objectives*.

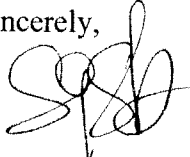
We have undertaken a comprehensive Public Outreach program that includes the following elements:

- Staff gave a presentation to the Planning Commission in August and to the Mayor and Council in September, and has given presentations to the Historic District Commission, Commission for the Environment, Traffic and Transportation Commission, Cultural Arts Commission, Rockville Economic Development, Inc. (REDI), Senior Citizens Commission and Town Center Action Team. There also has been liaison with the Recreation and Parks Board. Each of the Boards and Commissions has agreed to participate in the Review.
- Articles have appeared in Rockville Reports, the Gazette and the Washington Post Montgomery Extra. Informational emails have been sent to all Neighborhood Associations inviting them to participate in the review.
- An Interactive Web site has been launched that allows citizens to find their Planning Area read the CMP and make comments - all on-line.
- The City's cable television channel, TRC11, is airing two informational pieces: a five-minute interview with me about the review process that lets citizens know how they can participate, and a 30-second information spot that highlights the CMP Web site - and the opportunity to comment on-line. In addition all Mayor and Council, Planning Commission and Historic District Commission meetings are broadcast live, repeated frequently and available through the Internet.

We will begin discussions with the Planning Commission next month and anticipate that Commissioners will decide in the New Year whether or not a revision is warranted and, if so, what form it might take. The Commission's decision will then be forwarded to the Mayor and Council for their own review and recommendation to the State of Maryland.

We look forward to working with both of you on the review and potential revision of the CMP, as well as on the new required elements.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SS', with a vertical line extending downwards from the bottom of the signature.

Susan Swift, AICP, Director
Community Planning and Development Services

cc: Scott Ullery, City Manager
David B. Levy, Chief of Long Range Planning and Redevelopment, CPDS
Jim Wasilak, Chief of Planning, CPDS
Ann Wallas, Planner, CPDS